



Performance Evaluation

After the teacher-coordinator develops the training plan in cooperation with the training supervisor, the student should be evaluated on a regular basis to determine if progress is being made toward developing the specific job skills. An evaluation system should be developed which will measure student performance and provide the student with information on current strengths and areas where improvement is needed.

Developing a System for Evaluation

In developing an evaluation system, teacher-coordinators must determine the purpose of the evaluation, what needs to be evaluated, when evaluation should occur, and how to evaluate.

Purposes of Evaluation

In the work-based learning program, evaluation can provide the student, teacher-coordinator, and training sponsor with information that will be helpful in planning future instruction. Evaluation can be used for many reasons, one of which is to contribute to student grades. The purpose of conducting evaluations of students' on-the-job training must be specifically identified before the system can be developed.

The structure and content of the form, the procedures, and the use of the information may change, depending on the purpose of the evaluation. Teacher-coordinators should carefully consider why evaluation is needed and state the purposes clearly, so students and employers will understand and support the evaluation system.

Roles and Responsibilities

The teacher-coordinator identifies what, when, and how to evaluate, as well as procedures for evaluation and works with the training sponsor to conduct the evaluation session with the student.

In evaluating student performance, the training sponsor identifies which skills the student performs well and which skills the student needs to improve. The sponsor then helps the student in improving specific job skills and informs the teacher-coordinator of skills needing improvement so individual classroom instruction may be provided to the student.

What to Evaluate

The goals and objectives of the work experience program will provide information on what to evaluate. In addition to work adjustment skills and specific employment skills, teacher-coordinators should evaluate basic job skills, social and communication skills, personality traits, work habits, and student attitudes.

When to Evaluate

Evaluation should occur on a regular basis. Frequent evaluation reinforces positive behavior, effective job performance, and continued effective performance. In addition, skills that

Work-Based Learning



require improvement can be corrected before they seriously affect student performance. Completing an evaluation at least every five to nine weeks will help it be useful to the student and employer.

How to Evaluate

Evaluation forms are completed by training sponsors because they are in the best position to provide objective feedback on student job performance. Teacher-coordinators must structure the evaluation process by developing a procedure, providing evaluation materials, and scheduling and conducting a joint evaluation interview with the student and the training sponsor after the evaluation form has been completed.

Evaluation Procedures

When developing a system to evaluate students' on-the-job performance, the following steps may serve as a useful guide:

1. Identify what is to be evaluated. Beyond basic and technical job skills, the work habits, attitudes, and personality traits needed for job success should be evaluated. Common areas of interest are attendance, appearance, cooperation, work ethic, listening skills, following directions, punctuality, grooming, appearance, cooperation and dependability. (21st Century Skills identified earlier in this guide can serve as a baseline for building a profound evaluation tool.) Special care must be taken not to include items that are not consistent with the goals of the program i.e. exploration vs training.
2. Select or develop an evaluation form. The form should be carefully selected to allow student performance to be evaluated as completely and objectively as possible. Since the form will be used by many different groups, it should be easy to understand and use. Formats can range from detailed competency lists to general work-habit lists or a combination of several items. See example forms in the resources section of this guide.
3. Explain evaluation procedures. As students are accepted into the work experience program, and as training sponsors are identified to work with students, evaluation procedures should be explained to each one. Both students and training sponsors must appreciate the importance of evaluation in the effectiveness of on-the-job training, and they must be willing to use it. Parents should also understand the evaluation process and be familiarized with the tools to assist them in supporting the students involved.

Take evaluation forms to training sponsors. As the time for evaluation nears, teacher-coordinators should prepare students and training sponsors for the process. The teacher-coordinator should review the procedure and form with students, especially because it may be their first job evaluation. Be sure to respond to students' questions and concerns. Help them recognize that the purpose of evaluation is to identify both job strengths and areas needing improvement or exploration goals and that remarks about improvement should



not be taken as personal criticism. Teacher-coordinators should deliver evaluation forms to training supervisors in the best method for the employer (i.e. email, personal delivery, etc.) Personal delivery stresses the importance of evaluation and allows teacher-coordinators to review procedures with sponsors. Parents may also be contacted with an explanation of the evaluation process and tools.

4. Schedule and conduct the evaluation interview. Evaluation is conducted to identify student strengths and areas of needed improvement. Information obtained is used to structure the next on-the-job training/exploration period. Evaluation interviews offer an opportunity for students, training sponsors, and teacher-coordinators to understand the ratings and engage in an important part of the training process. Teacher-coordinators should control the evaluation interview to ensure a positive atmosphere is maintained. Important strengths and weaknesses should be discussed, and plans should be developed for the next training period. Each participant should be given ample opportunity to discuss the evaluation items. A careful record of the interview should be kept, particularly if information not on the form is discussed. Teacher-coordinators may want to meet individually with students and/or training sponsors, in case there is information that either wishes not to share with the other. Encourage parents to review progress with students and contact the teacher-coordinator for specific ideas for supporting their students.

Steps to Positive Evaluation Interviews

While everyone might agree on the importance of evaluation in the training process, the interview itself can be a difficult procedure for many individuals, managers, or supervisors to conduct. Teacher-coordinators must walk a fine line during the interview, carefully guiding the atmosphere and content, while also encouraging students and training sponsors to discuss the evaluation directly with each other. The following ideas may help make the evaluation interview a positive experience:

1. Make sure the interview is *conducted in a quiet, private place* which is free of interruptions.
2. *Plan for the evaluation interview* by identifying objectives, reviewing student records, developing suggestions for positive actions, and preparing a preliminary summary.
3. *Explain* that the purpose of the interview is to measure student progress and identify performance which is done well and performance which needs improvement. Remind students that the purpose of the interview is to help them improve their on-the-job training performance.
4. Start the interview by putting the student at ease. *Remain calm* regardless of student attitude or behavior.



5. *Open with positive statements* about skills the student performs well.
6. *Listen to the student.* Part of the purpose of the evaluation interview is to gain information or learn more about student attitudes toward the on-the-job training experience. The student should be given the opportunity to discuss strengths, areas of needed improvement, and means of improving performance. This information could be gathered ahead of time through a student's self-evaluation.
 - a) Self-Evaluation is an effective way for students to describe their learning experiences accomplished while enrolled in a work-place learning program. The following list of ideas can be incorporated into a student-based self-evaluation essay and/or oral/media presentation.
 - Describe how the learning objectives were accomplished and the steps used to complete objectives.
 - If there were challenges accomplishing the objectives, what were they and what did you learn about yourself?
 - Did the experience improve your job skills/create interests and/or improve your efficiency and productivity in completing work tasks?
 - Did the experience help establish/clarify career objectives?
7. *Talk about behavior, not about personality.* Focus the evaluation on the student's performance of basic job skills, work adjustment skills, human relations skills, and specific job skills needed to be successful in an occupation. Talk about objective job-skill performance, *not* about subjective factors.
8. *Offer encouragement.* Help the student recognize that you believe s/he does more things right than wrong. Offer sincere compliments when the student's performance merits positive reinforcement. When the student needs to improve a skill, be sure to provide specific suggestions and/or instructions on how to improve the performance.
9. *Leave the student anxious to improve.* Help students recognize that critical remarks by teacher-coordinators or training sponsors are not personal attacks. Help students identify ways they can improve their on-the-job performance.
10. *Plan for follow-up procedures.* Suggest how students will receive instruction to improve, whether that is classroom instruction from teacher-coordinators or specific job instruction from training sponsors. Give students specific instructions on why, how, and when improvement is expected.

To be complete, the evaluation interview should end with a summary of the discussion. In addition, plans should be developed and agreed upon for the next training period. When evaluation interviews are conducted successfully, subsequent on-the-job training efforts should be more effective.